

WHAT IS CLAIMED:

1. A device for clamping and ablating cardiac tissue comprising:

a first handle member;

a second handle;

first and second mating jaw members associated with the first and second handle members, the jaw members being movable by the handle members between a first open position and a second clamped position, the jaw members having opposed mating surfaces;

a first elongated electrode comprising a layer of gold-plated copper extending along the first jaw member;

a second elongated electrode comprising a layer of gold-plated copper extending along the second jaw member;

the first and second electrodes being adapted to be connected to an RF energy source so that, when activated, the first and second electrodes are of opposite polarity.

2. The device of claim 1 wherein the electrodes are between approximately 3 to 8 cm when in length and approximately 0.12 to 0.6 mm in width.

3. A tissue grasping apparatus comprising:

first and second grasping jaws, the grasping jaws being relatively moveable between open and closed positions; each jaw including an electrode comprising a layer of gold-plated copper and a clamping surface in face-to-face relation with the electrode and

clamping surface of the other jaw; the clamping surfaces of the jaws comprising an insulating material and the face-to-face electrodes being of opposite polarity and connectible to a power source for providing an electrical current between the electrodes;

whereby when tissue is grasped between said clamping surfaces, the electrodes are substantially entirely contacted by the tissue.

4. The apparatus of claim 4 wherein the parallel grasping jaws spaced apart between approximately 3 to 8 cm in length and approximately 0.12 to 0.6 mm in width.

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